



Let's talk about horses

By Jennifer Barr
Now that our world is putting on Spring, your horses probably look a mess! You wonder why, with longer days and cheerful windy weather, you suddenly feel so depressed and the horses are so bad-tempered. Spring Fever. The long-awaited sunshine only shows up the dirty windows; the warmth melts the snow and leaves a clutter of hockey pucks, tonka truck wheels, and dog dirt. The stable smells hot and straw no longer does its job.

The horses are higher than kites, misbehaving, breaking fences, and are certainly not your pride and joy. If they're anything like mine, they resemble motheaten buffalo robes as their hair sheds in untidy clumps. Even bay horses are permanently grey with mud and clumps of clay bejewel feathery legs. It does get better. As night follows day so lumpy woolly horses eventually become swans.

Tidy up
It is possible to tidy your horses up a bit and help nature along. Now is the time for your curry comb and shedding blade. Use your muscle, scrub and scrape that hair out. The horses will love it—they're so itchy. With scissors or clippers trim the long hairs on chins and outside the ears. Trim a fresh bridle path and pull the mane if the horse requires it. Pull or trim the tail. You'll be surprised how much improvement there is.

Don't clip the fetlock hair until the mud has dried up. That long hair protects the delicate skin on heels and pasterns from becoming chapped and developing "grease heel". Don't clip the whole body of the horse in an effort to hurry things along. You're clipping the new summer hair as well and the poor animal will look worse than ever. He'll have no protection from May frosts and cold spells either.

Swans
On the first really warm day, wash manes and tails in warm soapy water, rinse well and brush out completely. Also wash the sheath of a gelding and the udder of a mare. The mud that collects in the skin folds can be most uncomfortable. Trim hooves and keep extra clean.

One day soon your work will reward you. You'll look out of the window and see a field of swans.

Please send letters to Jennifer Barr, R.R. 2 Acton.

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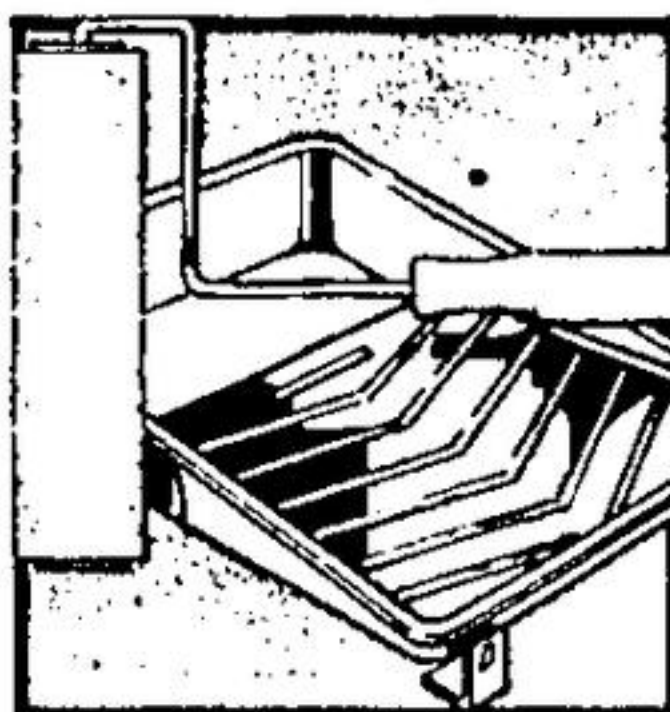
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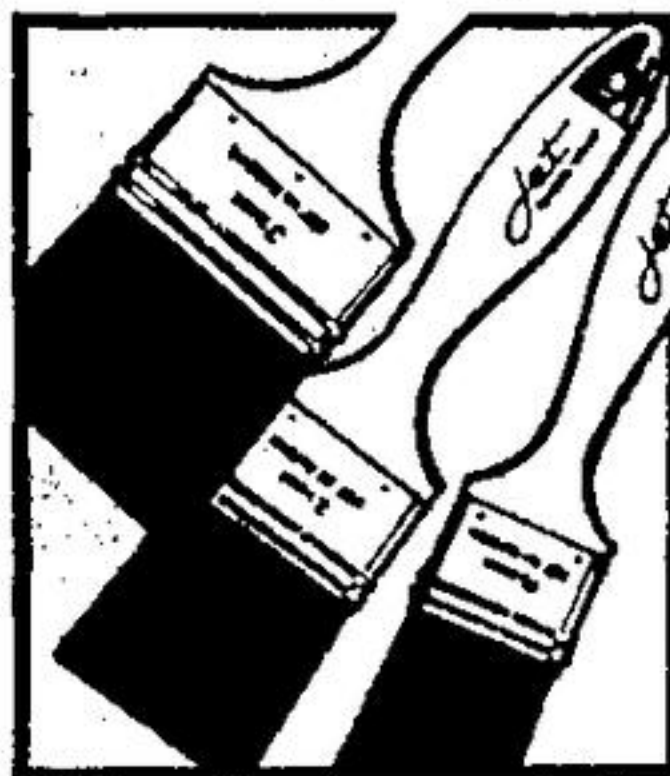
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Preparing to paint

Interior Painting: how to start:

1. Move all furniture into the centre of the room—then cover it with plastic sheeting. Remove all picture hanging tags, nails, plus drapes and blinds.
2. Wash ceiling and wall surfaces with a mixture of warm water and mild detergent. Rinse off with clean, cold water.
3. Inspect all surfaces for cracks and holes. Don't forget the woodwork and baseboards!
4. Obtain a sturdy stepladder (BEAVER stocks several types).
5. Cover the floor area over which you're going to work with plastic sheeting (from BEAVER).
6. Using a narrow-bladed painter's knife, cut out any cracks in the ceiling, so that the crack looks like a triangle upside-down—this forms a "key" to hold the filler in. Now do the same operation on any wall cracks.
7. With a wet brush, dampen the cracks and fill with Polyfilla.

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